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ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes European views on adventure therapy and therapeutic outdoor activities. Opening sections list the elements of outdoor adventure education and current trends affecting its development and direction, describe the mission and activities of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning, and note social and youth problems in Europe today. Historical views, philosophies, and educational approaches concerning the body and nature are reviewed and related to the practical matter of encouraging outdoor clients to get in touch with their bodies and nature. Various criteria are offered for defining therapeutic outdoor activities and a developed outdoor therapy model. A model of personal development and change is outlined, and the effects of outdoor conditions on therapeutic processes are discussed. Three different types of program objectives are examined: those of the facilitator therapist, the institution or organization, and the client. A case example demonstrates the therapeutic benefits of combining outdoor activities and psychodrama in a social-welfare project for multiply handicapped youth. (Contains 24 references, most in German.) (SV)

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Theoretical Considerations of Therapeutic Concepts in Adventure Therapy

By Guenter Amesberger

Introduction

I will make three introductory comments to this paper.

First, I am delegated from the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning so I will include some basic and common ideas of the institute's members and representatives in this paper. A very short overview of different adventure education and therapy activities is given. The many different types of work in the diverse European countries are not discussed in this paper.

Second, in the following statements I will focus mainly on the European perspectives of adventure therapy in the outdoors. The strong influence of North American concepts in Europe will not be ignored; however, I think these are well known to readers.

Finally, I bring a social and environmental perspective as well. The following discussion focuses on selected aspects of adventure therapy, as it is impossible to go into more detail within the scope of this paper.

The European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning

What is outdoor adventure education?

There are many views concerning outdoor adventure education. There is, however, a great deal of common ground. Practitioners seem to agree that outdoor adventure education is composed of most or all of the following elements:

- it stimulates personal and social development,
- academic, aesthetic, spiritual, social, and environmental elements,
- increased responsibility for own learning,
- developing increased confidence and self-respect,
- direct experience, that is experiential learning,
- some experience with the outdoors,
- a "journeying" element,
- respect for the environment,

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- professional standards to ensure community, physical, and emotional safety,
- protection of the environment from overuse.

Issues affecting the development of outdoor adventure education.

There are some key trends and issues influencing the directions in which outdoor adventure education is developing. These include:

1. The mind and body debate. There have been many debates over the centuries about the relationship between mind and body. In modern education, the debate is whether a primarily intellectual form of education is adequate for the proper development of the individual, or whether a more direct, non-abstract form of educational experience is more appropriate.

2. The relationship between the individual and society debate. As civilization moves and change accelerates, many individuals become disconnected from society. These individuals feel that they have no control and influence through the political process to bring about beneficial changes in their lives and within their communities. Practitioners can work outdoors to help people identify areas where they can take control of their lives and take a more active part in their communities.

3. The relationship between individuals and the environment debate. Environmental issues are of increasing importance in the political agenda, yet many people live an urban life which does not allow them to experience the relationship between their actions and the elements which support life on earth. Outdoor adventure education can provide direct contact with the natural world, which can enable people to develop informed values and opinions.

About the Institute itself.

The mission of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning is to promote the development of outdoor adventure education through an exchange of practical and academic knowledge, and to develop new frameworks, initiatives and approaches to enhance outdoor adventure education across the community. The values of the institute are based on a respect for diversity and community, the promotion of equality of opportunity, and the recognition of professional standards.

The purposes of the Institute are to: (a) develop theoretical foundations for the field of outdoor adventure education, (b) develop professional standards that recognize commonality and diversity, (c) undertake research and implement projects to influence the quality of practice, and (d) identify and develop areas of commonality within environmental education.

The Institute achieves its mission and purposes by developing networks and exchanges for academic staff, students, and practitioners, facilitating conferences. It promotes information exchanges through electronic media, publications, and congresses; coordinating collaborative research projects; and developing trans-national codes of practice. Finally the Institute engages professional development programs and core curricula for programs to achieve an internationally accepted degree, and monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision.

General Environmental Conditions in Europe Today

Culture and nationality are diverse. It is a European tradition that borders divide cultures and lead to different cultural movements. When the members of the Institute started our communication about outdoor concepts it was obvious how difficult it is to find a common language to understand the different meanings and intentions of our work.

Nature, body and sport, and adventure therapy, outdoor education, and experiential learning are full of different meanings and arise from different ideological backgrounds. I think this is one reason why this paper may turn out to be of considerable importance for communication and intercultural projects in the future.

Europe, like many other places worldwide, has two contradictory movements: it is moving closer and closer together and nationalism is on the rise and becoming more radical. Until 1995 we had an increasing rate of violence against aliens. Equally alarming is the current violence against people with disabilities. We have to consider that cruel crimes, even though they actually occur rarely, lead to a strong overestimation of youth criminality. This perception is heightened by the way the media report those events.

It is suggested that violence in youths is motivated by the following factors: (a) action and thrill, (b) a desire to get a respected status in the group, (c) frustration and lack of meaning in life or expulsion from the education system or both, and (d) racism and extreme right-wing sympathies (Willems et al, 1993).

Ecological aspects are highly topical issues in Europe today. That widespread awareness nevertheless determines neither ecological nor political decisions. The dominant assumption is that enhancing economic growth is the most important aim. This is illustrated by the increasing rates of unemployment, at the time about 10% in Europe, with critical areas up to 60% and privileged areas almost none, in phases when the economic development is positive.

Summarizing the situation in Europe in a very simplified way, the following main problems can be pointed out:

- racism and ethnic problems,
- unemployment and growing poverty,
- drug abuse,
- gender differences in the understanding of social roles and functions ,
- fundamental questions of purpose,
- violence and the growth of aggression or at least a change in its expression.

Experiential learning and adventure therapy are of course suitable to support youths in coping with such problems. Experiential education and adventure therapy should not be abused in an attempt to solve sociopolitical problems that are caused by wrong political decision (Becker & Shirp, 1986).

Social-Historic Background of Body and Nature

The following considerations do not stem from pure interest in history. They are made because I strongly believe that various social-historic thoughts are deeply engraved on the European understanding of nature today. When we are working with people in a therapeutic context in the outdoors we have to reflect on their idea of nature, not just our own. The consequences for therapeutic work will be discussed later on.

In Europe we have a tough and complicated relation to the two terms of body and nature and especially the meaning and emotions that are linked to those terms. Both play an important role in the outdoor therapy process. If we look at the two terms in more detail, it is easy to discover that they are closely related to each other. We might call the body the "inner nature" and call the usual word nature, the "outer nature."

In the process of civilization the inner and outer nature have been divided more and more. A lot of authors think that the starting point of this process was Plato with his metaphor of the cave – "Hoehlengleichnis" – which says that there is no direct contact to the reality. It is only possible to get some connection through the soul and to look at the shadows of reality. The Romans continued this perspective and fationalized nature as something that is for use only.

There was a certain countermovement in the Middle Ages. Also strongly influenced by Plato, Francis of Assisi saw nature as an expression of God. Nature therefore included wisdom and sanity. That meant that nature was something humanity had to take care of and protect. This influence is still very apparent in a lot of European countries.

With the beginning of the modern times and the paradigm change of Kopernikus, God was removed from the image of nature and scientists tried to bring nature into formulas and rules. Descartes is generally accused of having been the key philosopher of the dualism of mind and body, "cogito ergo sum." That is not as correct as is often assumed because Descartes' point of view was very sophisticated. Nevertheless, nature gradually became the opposite of the human intellect. In this context, knowledge, and particularly knowledge about nature, was the key to freedom. Humanity should no longer be forced by nature. The human being was understood as a rational being. Nature was disassociated from rational human existence and the distance to the body—or inner nature—increased.

The problem with these views of nature was soon recognized. Some of the most important thinkers should be mentioned because of their influence on concepts of experiential learning and therapy. There is no question that Rousseau made very important contributions to education. There were some very problematic ones too (see Schoerghuber, 1997). One of Rousseaus's basic ideas (mil, 1981) was that everything by God is well done and everything under the influence of humankind degenerates. Nature is the normative positive element and the development of culture, especially urbanization, is the beginning of the end. Ennobling starts in the country. The romantic idea of nature held by Rousseau matches some romantic illusions of today. Such illusions may help to flee from the real problems but they will not help solve them. The idea of starting from the child's point of view —vom Kinde aus – was reduced to the idea that the child is equal to nature. One of the most important aims of therapy today is to understand the conditions children, youths, and adults are living in and to find ways and means to support them in solving and maybe changing their situations. I do not think it can be hostility — civilization or computers that will really help them.

The so-called reform pedagogy — "Reformpaedagogik" — introduced important attempts to overcome the exclusively mind-orientated education. I am sure that its proponents did have the best intentions. It is a pity that they favored nature in an unreflected way, which made them open for abuse by National Socialism later on. There always was a very differentiated connection between sport, body, nature, and National Socialism and racism in general. From a historical point of view it seems impossible to decide if there was a clear positive or negative or ambivalent connection: "Nature, National Socialism and sport are an unbeatable ideological mesh" (Schoerghuber, 1997, p. 139). It is no accident that ill-informed politicians and administrators still reject

outdoor projects because they assume that these projects are connected with fascist thoughts and activities.

After the Second World War it was almost forbidden to mention body or nature. Sport pedagogy turned to the so-called "Bildungstheorie" as a means of escape. I think "Bildung" can hardly be translated to "education" because it focuses on the teaching of values and humanistic philosophy. In some ways you do find this idea of educating values in the philosophical approach of Kurt Hahn too (Hentig 1966).

Today the awareness is slowly growing that it is necessary to discuss the relationships between body, nature, exercise and sport, and therapy in a very new way. I am deeply convinced that everyone is at sometime or another thrown back at one's own relationship to fascism when in a group in the outdoors and working on one's awareness. I conclude that little awareness of the problematic social-historic components on therapy in the outdoors increases the risk of an unconscious fascist "sphere of influence" that confuses personal and social development.

Anthropology of the human image.

What are the characteristics and anthropological foundations of human beings and how do they influence our work? Gehlen (1958) and Plessner (1979) made important contributions. Gehlen thought of humankind as a special draft of nature. Human beings are furthermore thought of as being exposed to reality and as biologically insufficient. That is why they have to develop culture, their second nature. With the progress of culture, education becomes more and more important. The more that performance, achievement, and success are valued in this culture, the more deviant behavior is recognized and therapy becomes unavoidable.

As Schoerghuber (1997) points out, there is one fundamental and essential error in the ideas of Gehlen, which is the assumption that there is no possibility to perceive the first nature. This perspective again splits brain and body, however in a more sophisticated manner. The human being, society, and culture are easily thought of as the counterpart of nature. The enticing idea of becoming free from nature includes three important questions: (1) free from what, (2) free for what, and (3) free for whom? These are, as we all know, very important questions in therapy, too. What does it mean, if somebody tells us after some time of participation in the group process during an outdoor therapy seminar that he or she feels so free in nature? It may give us some information about the client's understanding of nature. We also have to keep our own conception of nature in mind.

In an actual concept of the human image we have to see a person as an active individual that tries to realize aims. The person not only has a body, but he or she "is body" (Petzold, 1992). Being body constitutes the relationship to the world and to the outer nature. The human being is to be thought of as a being with self-organizational forces working on both conscious and unconscious levels represented in mind and body.

Growing Distance from Body and Nature

Norbert Elias (1976) deduced in his work the growing distance to the body through the civilization process. It is described as a comparatively slow process over hundreds of years. Now at a very high speed within 10 to 20 years the body is back again. In the book *Quest of Excitement* Elias & Dunning (1986) also assume that there is a reduction of

excitement in the lives of people, so they need new kinds of thrilling activities. Sport is one of those possibilities. In this sense the rediscovery of the body is just an expression of the importance of certain themes like sexuality or sport. The connection with such themes makes it evident that the body was never really out. It was only outside of the scope of declared values of the society, not out of the mind of the human being. Freud (1948) has showed already that sexuality is one of the main forces in the person and only suppressed and replaced by other cultural techniques. That Freud himself was a victim of his time is demonstrated by his therapeutic techniques, which ignored the body totally. Starting with Wilhelm Reich (1981), the body therapy techniques developed more or less continuously. Today we have social conditions in which for many people their relations to their body, sexuality, and nature are open, unclear, conflicting, inconsistent, and contradictory. It seems as though there is a gap between the presentation of the body and body awareness. This gap seems to be increasing. Almost the same process happens with the outer nature and the relation of human beings to it. This parallel is another indication for the structural identity of body and nature.

Therapeutic aspects of nature and body based on constructivism.

If we follow the idea that reality always is a construction of the person (Watzlawick & Krieg 1991; Neimeyer 1995), we can also find out that the consciousness of nature is dependent on a relationship a person constructs based on his or her prior experiences and future intentions. Reality in this sense means whatever a person takes as real. Accordingly, the person always actively constructs nature and its values. For example, one person may interpret weather conditions as a consequence of him- or herself thinking that there is always fine or terrible weather when they are outdoors. One criterion to find out the effects of the perception and construction of reality are those perceptions and cognitions that bring out the differences. It can be an important step to really recognize that it is not I that influences the weather, but it is I that influences the way I handle different weather conditions.

First practical impact: How to encourage people to get in touch with nature.

When we work with clients in the outdoors we do not teach about nature, we encourage people to get in touch with nature. This requires getting in touch with themselves. To get there we follow some principles including: (a) slowing down the speed of everyday life, (b) deepening the impressions of our sense organs, (c) reducing our sense organs, for example using unsighted activities, (d) starting an inner dialogue identifying what attracts me and what rejects, repels or disgusts me, (e) starting the dialogue with the outer nature, (f) body and nature awareness exercises with a focus on "grounding" (depending on clinical diagnosis), (g) inner rhythm, breathing rhythm and rhythm in nature, (h) focusing on breathing in and release and breathing out. When there is a clinical diagnosis, we have to be very careful with the specific problems of our participants. For example, working with abused persons in an adventure therapy program may lead to a high amount of fear and anxiety when the respective persons are asked to relax or slow down. We need special interventions to keep them in contact with their bodies.

First Approach to a Therapeutic Concept

Outdoor activities fit in with the spirit of the time. They offer new ways of education and therapy and they fit perfectly the in-stereotypes of being active, being outdoors, the holistic approach combining mind and body, and action and thrill. Not only are the understandings of outdoor concepts very different, so are the approaches offered. These include commercial action, adventure holidays, management training, educationally-oriented experiential learning programs in and out of schools and educational institutions, social therapeutic concepts especially for disadvantaged groups, and many more.

This boom of adventure education and experiential learning in the outdoors leads to a lot of problems like ideological abuse, degeneration of the basically strong ideas, poor displays of competence and expertise, and the problems deriving from these. To solve these problems, more communication is needed about positive and negative experiences with outdoor activities, about intervention techniques, about professional development, continuing education and quality standards, and about indications and contraindications. The need for this communication was one reason for establishing a European institute.

Following on from the earlier discussion on the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning I have to add some more specifications. In speaking about therapeutic concepts in the outdoors it is important to acknowledge that there are a lot of very different ideas about these in Europe. That is why I want to bring in a more differentiated definition of what we understand under so-called integrative outdoor activities. This is very similar to a definition of adventure therapy offered by Simon Crisp (1997).

A descriptive definition of therapeutic outdoor activities.

In the context of therapy, integrative outdoor activities are to be understood as group activities that are aimed at task-solving, that are socially therapeutic activities out in nature which meet the criteria discussed below (for a more comprehensive discussion see Amesberger, 1992).

1. The projects are generally done in certain typical phases. There is a preparation phase, which includes working out the theoretical and practical concepts, communication and cooperation with the involved institutions, and training the team. The latter can be seen as a continuous process. The selection and first contact with and participants occurs. There is the preparation of participants' goals and intentions and a "contract" on reciprocal obligations agreed to. The implementation phase combines a range of outdoor activities (e.g., three blocks of 3 days, one course of 14 days) and back home situations. Lastly, there is the assimilation of the courses and seminars and transferring the goals and experiences to the participants' own lives' (Amesberger, 1994).
2. The work is based on a diagnostic concept that leads to differentiated aims. Diagnosis is to be understood as a process concept (Pawlik 1982). The clients are given exercise-related tasks and challenges to introduce personal and group dynamics and to facilitate dealing with basic, personal topics. Group work and psychotherapy are the techniques used to accomplish this.
3. "Erlebnis" has a significant position in the process of therapeutic work. It is the moment of concise gestalt. "Erlebnis" may be translated as experience or

adventure if you do not focus on the aspect of challenge but put the focus on awareness.

4. Nature is of high importance and receives special attention in the therapeutic process: It serves as a framework and background that is filled with symbolic and symbolized meaning and significance by the participants to heighten the awareness of the individual in a holistic manner.

5. Learning takes place at cognitive, emotional, and behavioral levels by acting, reflecting, transferring, and deepening by going further in therapeutic interventions. Based on he qualification of the therapist, different therapeutic methods are combined with the outdoor-concept. Elements of body awareness, bio-energetic analysis, psychodrama, integrative gestalt and the systemic therapy have been used.

6. The guide-team consists of social workers, psychotherapists, outdoor experts, scientists, and psychological supervisors. Each team-member has the final responsibility in a certain area, for example group process or outdoor events. Every member has to have high knowledge and experience in the field of the other to guarantee effective networking.

What are the criteria of a developed outdoor therapy model?

The criteria for a developed outdoor therapy model include:

- social-historic background,
- an image of the human being,
- a theory of the therapy,
- therapy aims, indications and contraindications,
- theory and techniques of diagnosis,
- intervention strategies,
- the client-therapist interrelationship has to be extended to a person(body)-nature-person (group members and therapist or outdoor-trainer) relationship,
- evaluation and control of the primary and secondary effects. For example, changing people's behavior and awareness -the primary effect- may have consequences on the social environment. They may feel better too, but sometimes it happens that other "new" problems or secondary effects occur.

Specifics of therapy in the outdoors - There is little or no protection.

If somebody joins single or group therapy, she or he has the possibility to go into his or her conflicting emotions or behavior. One of the most important things is to recognize the fact that persons are mainly in their fantasy world (Berliner, 1994). We use "empty chairs" to have significant people sit in those positions we assume them to be. We beat mattresses imagining people who hurt us. But we never would do this in reality. There is no doubt that the emotions are real but they are strongly influenced by our past, and are often projections from significant persons in our biography. Neuroticism — as Strotzka, an important psychoanalyst in Vienna and a teacher of mine said — is an error in time. It is important that there is a deep tolerance for all thoughts, emotions and impulses expressed by the client. Slowly the clients learn to recognize which emotions and behaviors are concerned with the past and what kind of contact they have to the "here and now."

The strict division between a more "virtual" therapy environment and reality is abolished in the outdoor concepts. Adventure therapy deals with an unusual environment that is not common to the participants. The most striking difference between adventure therapy and traditional psychotherapy is the clients' strong involvement in a reality that is neither harmless nor perfectly safe. Nevertheless, we make a strict distinction between subjective, perceived risks that ought to be high sometimes and objective, existing risks that generally should be low. In Europe a lot of therapists argue therefore that the only possibility is to work with action-orientated therapy methods: People have to handle certain challenges and get very direct feedback about the outcome. Nature, the group, and the facilitator help them to find out how they influence their outcome and whether the strategies they are using are helpful or destructive ones. This supports the development of self-efficacy, one of the most evident results (Gass, 1993; Amesberger, 1994).

I am strongly convinced that when working with harder psychological problems, such as early disorders, borderline syndrome and early deviant socialization, the main-focus has to be on the relationship between the client and facilitator or therapist. This leads to a lot of delicate problems.

Therapeutic work and therapeutic effects.

In Europe we are involved in a sometimes slightly emotional discussion between therapeutic and educational concepts in the outdoors (Michl, 1996; Kreszmeier & Hufenus, 1996). Amongst other misunderstandings and some aspects of rivalry, the following useful distinction is often ignored in this discussion. It makes some sense to divide work in the outdoors into two kinds or aspects: educational and therapeutic. If we work in the outdoors in a more educational sense, it may happen, that some participants change in the way of a therapeutic effect.

Therapy focuses the reflection on internalized norms and values with the aim to support a person to find new and more suitable structures for his or her life. Destructive and dysfunctional behaviors or emotions should be recognized in their effects, as well as helpful and effective ones. The outdoor process supports a lot of educational aims by just living in a group under "natural conditions." But it has again to be emphasized that this is not the effect of an "objective nature," rather it is the effect of the individual awareness of nature including all the experiences and values put in the image of nature.

In a therapeutic context these experiences are tackled in a certain kind of metaprocess. If we use psychodrama, the participants come onto the stage to arrange their roles. If we use bio-energetic analysis people follow their body processes in emotional states of their biography that may help them to understand their feelings better. In a way, the participants take some steps into a more regressive state of their mood. After a certain time period they are accompanied back into the here and now situation to get in deeper contact with "reality" and to go on having experiences in nature and within the group. So "indoor" and "outdoor" sessions change several times and develop the clients' possibilities.

Theory of development.

Personal development is a complex interaction of different aspects: on the one hand, people act and develop by the effect of their actions. On the other hand people have made significant, experiences that have taught them to interpret the outcome of their actions in

certain ways, so that they are not able to change their minds only because of different outcomes. They do not really experience. In a short model we can see some of these influences (see figure 1). Particularly for the therapeutic context, there is a certain limitation of experiential learning or at least an aspect we have to handle very carefully: How have situations to be arranged so that clients do not repeat there well-known old habits in a apparently new situation? The only reality of the person is its one consciousness that we have to respect all the time. There is a paradox between the physical and psychological concept of the "present": In Physics "present" is a point without any extension. In our consciousness, however, we are always in the "present." It makes no difference, if we think about the past or the future our brain and consciousness works in the "psychological present". (cf. Varga). And this is one key to change in an outdoor-therapy concept. Because you have so many chances to let your clients prove their perception and to get feedback on this process by the group, the "nature" in the above understood way and the therapist.

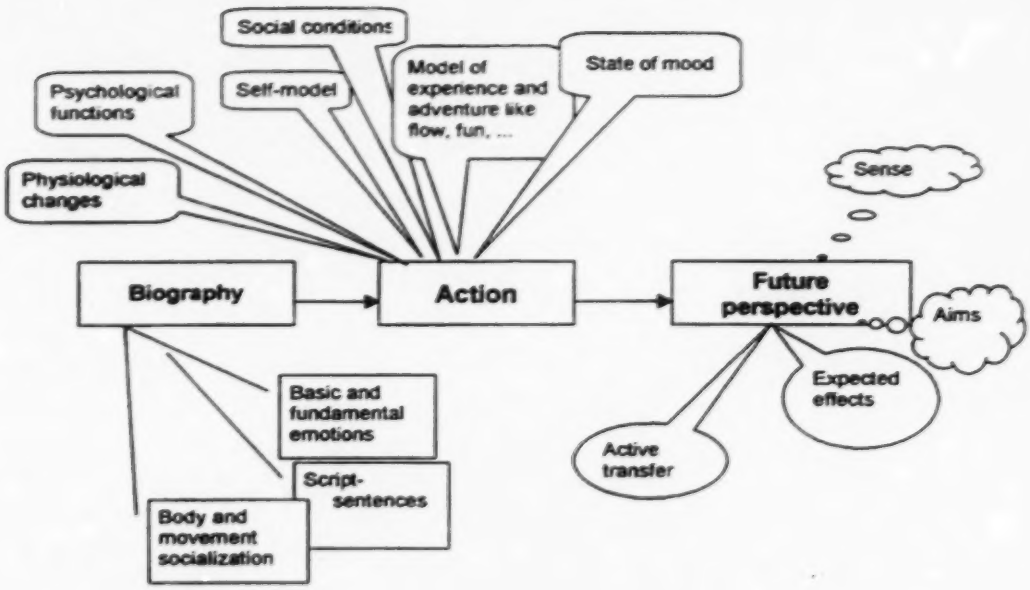

Figure 1. The influence of the biography and future perspectives on actual actions under the perspective of development.

A contract with the clients is required. If the clientele is not able to do so it is one of the most important themes in the process itself. Nevertheless there should be a contract with the responsible person or institution to which the clientele belongs. It has to be determined what kind of clients with which kind of disorder are in the program: The consequence of step one leads to the intervention strategies that have to control the amount of regression, the amount of confrontation and the possibility to transfer experiences into learning processes.

The environmental conditions of an outdoor program deepen therapeutic processes and in general we must slow down this process to make it really effective. There is no

reason to push this process as far as my experiences extend and our scientific research shows us that participants have very deep experiences and have to work them out for a long period afterwards. The more handicapped they are, the more support is needed in the transfer phase. So the principal of the "here and now" has to be forced. Nevertheless it would be an act of ignorance not to respect that transference is a very sensitive aspect in the outdoor work and requires high awareness. Realizing this it is obvious that outdoor programs have to be brought to an end very carefully. The trainer has to leave enough time to make the participants able to return to their back home situations effectively. Of course transfer only by chance happens without systematic support. As remarked above this also depends on the clientele. The relationship of crises, risk and chance should receive high awareness (Danish & D'Augelli 1990). In crisis situations the following questions are helpful:

- Is there a risk of self-destructiveness?
- What direction do aggressive impulses have?
- What is the more exact diagnosis of the crisis? For example differences between a hysteric, psychotic or borderline crisis.

Importance of Aims

There are three different points of view: The participant's, the outdoor-instructor's and institutions', organizations' (generally representing the "interests of the society" and/or political interests). Aims can be conscious aims, verbally expressed or hidden and suppressed.

Aims of the facilitator therapist.

Using the taxonomy from Simon Priest (1996) we can differentiate recreational/sport/leisure; educational; developmental/training/therapeutic, and therapy programs. In the following I only focus on therapy and make a clear distinction between two kinds of aims:

(1) *Coping with reality:* This aims for a realistic and efficient confrontation with life and life events. Favoring abilities to solve practical and ethical problems in life. These aspects are strongly related to the ability of being aware of the "here and now," developing capabilities and coping strategies.

(2) *Developing Identity:* This contains primarily aims like self-esteem, becoming aware of the right to live, finding out one's own identity to get to the root of introjection and internalization, etc.

Aims expressed in such a general way are often not very helpful. Because on the one hand they are widely agreed upon and on the other they remain on the surface of the real problems in therapy. So we have to raise some more questions in relation to our therapeutic work:

- What is the real or at least hypothetical destruction, disorder or malfunctions we are concerned with?
- What are the helpful aspects of the client's behavior and feeling?
- What is the functional and emotional connection between our methods and the problem of the client?
- What kind of contract do we have with our clients?
- Do the environmental (social, institutional) conditions make change realistic?
- Is it possible to reach the aims with the standard of our qualification?

This makes it quite clear: Only a well arranged setting of aims makes it possible to be effective especially in a long term view.

Aims of organizations and institutions.

In Europe, institutions are steeped in bureaucracy. The consequence is that it is not easy for them to change their way of work or to change structures. Furthermore, projects have an important aspect in developing institutions; setting projects in institutions has great impact on the compliance and on the outcome of measurements. This is especially true for outdoor projects. In general, in our social institutions (schools, institutions for handicapped people, institutions working with disadvantaged people) there is a lack of resources. So if you bring in new ideas and activities a lot of institutional questions arise:

- Who is supported by this project? Outdoor projects often are set in situations where nothing else seems to be helpful. So this is a chance for those concepts to show their power but it also can be a trap - The idea to solve an unsolvable problem.
- Have other resources been cut?
- Is anybody criticized by this project? May somebody interpret the project as a reaction to his ineffective work?

Therefore some aspects are of high importance to settle a project in an institution well:

- What is the structure of the institution?
- In which position is the person in the institution that favors the project?
- Who in the institution wins by the project (image, money, and attention)? Who loses?
- How can the project be connected within the institution? We called it combining the resources: coordinating all those whom have to do with each individual person in the project. Team talks (work and home, special services, parents...), to work out a common goal and implementation strategy within the project framework.

It is important to publicize and discuss the project in the institution, to give information and involve the ideas and interests of many. The project should work as much as possible from a broad basis and not appear to be forced by the decision making lobby.

Aims of the client.

There is a big difference between being in the project by one's own free will or under obligation. In general the latter causes a shift from declared to hidden aims. It forces us to be very cautious in the beginning and to accept the position of the client.

Another important aspect is the intellectual and emotional abilities of the client to formulate his aims at the beginning of the project. What we learned especially in our

work with multiple handicapped people is that developing aims is an important aspect in any kind of outdoor work how ever long it may last.

A Single Case Example to Explicit Isolated Aspects of Our Work

This example is taken out of a project with multiple handicapped people from an organization for handicapped (youth at work). The clientele is of being characterized as disadvantaged even in the organization itself, in danger of being thrown out because of decline. The organization provides social welfare at home and in the work place.

With reference to the *Descriptive Definition of Therapeutic Outdoor-Adventure* we are in phase three and use outdoor activities combined with Psychodrama: The two methods are not to be seen as purely additive; instead, they interact systematically: interhuman relationships and complex situations are dramatized, not just discussed in Psychodrama. Thus Psychodrama gives clients with little abstraction and reflection ability the chance to take a concrete look at their own "roles" and gain insights they could hardly gain otherwise. Greatly shortened excerpts from the case "Ilse" (fictitious name) shall demonstrate this. Ilse suffers from a rare disease of the locomotor system (Friedreich ataxia). She tries to combat the disease with competitive sports for the handicapped. Ilse is very ambitious, rather a loner, and has great difficulty accepting help. Movement and perception: the start of the Outdoor program (hiking to the mountain hut, first exercises...) makes their (different) handicaps clear to the participants and leads to somatic reactions in some of them. Ilse "cannot see these handicaps," is silent (defense, regression, fixation). Clarification: In a further phase, Ilse begins to support others, verbally and through actions.

The "Swing" was planned as the Outdoor Activity. The idea was to get the entire group across the river on a rope. The activity's goal is such that everyone must help accomplish it (the entire group must get across), and the activity is designed so that the participants must help each other physically to reach the goal.

This was a touchy subject for Ilse. Used to taking care of herself and to solving problems on her own (especially physical ones), one could see a conflict taking place inside her. For a long time she stood aside and obviously did not want to participate. But the task was structured otherwise. If Ilse wanted the group to reach the goal, she had to accept help, which she finally did very reluctantly. The group lifted her onto the knot and pushed her across the river, where the others helped her down. Thus the activity was a success for the entire group and, so it seemed at first, for Ilse. During the psychodrama group session in the afternoon, a participant praised her in the beginning. At this time another participant was also carried in who was unable to move at the time (leading to further intensification of Ilse's central conflict, which consisted in the necessity for her to "partake").

Staging and verbalization: Ilse volunteered for a "scene" with her illness as the topic. The following roles were cast in this psychodrama: Health - "I want to stay healthy!" Fear - "I'm lonely!" Illness - "I'm with you!" Ambition - "I want to play ping-pong!" Wheelchair - "Don't handicap me!"

Ilse was obviously moved. The conflict again came out in the evening. She "provoked" a "fight" with the instructor who had played the frightening Wheelchair in the role-play. Ilse fought with all her strength, and the fight ended in a tie. In this psychodrama session, hints for further therapeutic interventions could also be found, e.g.:

"Strength disappears when fear sets in", an important behavior pattern for her daily life. Ilse is now employing concrete measures in her life, which are geared towards better dealing with her fear of her illness - not least through the coordinated intervention of the social workers.

As this example demonstrates, Outdoor Activities seem to provide a valuable supplement to social work. However, they can and should not compensate for other important socio-political shortcomings (cf. Becker & Schirp, 1986). The long-term effect is always based on combining resources. The evaluated outcome and basic ideas about evaluation are documented in Amesberger (1996, 1994).

A Structured Holistic Model of Therapy-Aspects in the Outdoors

Starting from the above described image of human we can understand it as a biologic-physiologic-psychologic-sociologic-unity (Uexküll 1990). This makes it possible to locate disorders on different levels as well as the interaction of multiple disorders. The diagnosis leads to hierarchically arranged aims. But we always should be looking, if changes in the conscious area also cause changes in others. If we for example support higher body or nature awareness this may have effects on the verbal expression or the social contact people want to have or try to avoid.

Sometimes it is important not to start with the personal change but change the social conditions, for example in the family or in the institution. If we are attentive to this we can arrange group structures in the outdoors that support those changes. This demonstrates the importance of the position persons have in social structures. Not being careful especially with aspects of systemic effects, this may lead us to outdoor-setting that "invite" people to repeat and replay their home or institutional situation and we are wondering, why don't they change their behavior, if this behavior is neither effective nor satisfying from the "observers" point of view.

In conclusion I want to emphasize that our focus always guides our interventions. This may be clothed in a metaphor: If we touch a small tree on a certain point, we just have some idea how it reacts at the point where we touched it, but we never can predict the movements of the whole tree. Nevertheless we may watch the effects carefully.

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